# Research Essay

The PASS 17-15 research essay question is:

**What will be the greatest security challenge in X (assigned neighboring country) in 2030 and how would you mitigate it?**

Country X is a neighboring country of yours. *Neighbor* is broadly defined.

The Program Director, Dr. Carolyn Haggis, will assign you your “Country X”. You cannot change your assignment, and your seminar leader cannot change your assignment. You must write an essay on the “Country X” you were assigned. “Country X” Assignments will be posted on GlobalNet.

If there is a PASS participant from your “Country X”, you are encouraged to speak with him/her in order to get his/her ideas on future security challenges in the region.

## Rules

The research essay is required for completion of the PASS Program. It is not optional.

All submissions should be typed in English and submitted electronically to your seminar leaders.

The limit is 1500 words. If you wish to write a longer essay, you must get advance approval from your seminar leaders.

Your final essay must include the following:

1. Your name
2. The title of your research essay
3. The word count of the essay
4. List of Works Consulted. That is, you must identify at least three papers, newspaper articles, books, websites, etc. that you consulted when researching this essay. If you interviewed a PASS participant, and he/she agrees, you may list him/her as a source.

## How you will be assessed

You will be given written feedback on the security challenge you selected and the mitigation strategy you proposed. This will be an assessment of your essay’s content.

## Essay Instructions

**Dear students,**

This is to inform you of the requirements for the research essay that is an integral part of the PASS 17-15 Program. It is a requirement for the Program and must be submitted electronically to your seminar leader by 27 October. The assignment is to write a research essay on the greatest security challenge you think your assigned neighboring country, X, will face in 2030 and the steps you would take to mitigate it.

**The essay must include the following:**

1. Your name
2. The title of your research essay
3. The word count of the essay
4. List of Works Consulted. That is, you must identify at least three papers, newspaper articles, books, websites, etc. that you consulted when researching this essay. If you interviewed a PASS participant, and he/she agrees, you may list him/her as a source.

**Important dates:**

- **22 September:** Outline Due
- **10 October:** Draft Due
- **27 October:** Final Essay Due

**Oral presentations:**

Monday 13 November to Wednesday 15 November: oral presentation of maximum 15 minutes to your seminar followed by a short Q&A. See LibGuides for PowerPoint slide templates.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Writing a research essay gives you the opportunity to:

- Research what scholars think will be the key future challenges faced by a country in your region.
- Analyze and prioritize national security challenges.
- Brainstorm possible mitigation strategies and approaches.
- Get individualized feedback on your essay writing skills and use of English.
- Leave Garmisch with a written product that may be of personal or professional use later on (e.g. basis for a publication or fellowship application).

**Deadlines:**

- **Friday 22 September:** Outline Due
- **Tuesday 10 October:** Draft Due
- **Friday 27 October:** Final Essay Due

- **Monday 13 November to Wednesday 15 November:** oral presentation of maximum 15 minutes to your seminar followed by a short Q&A.

**Payment of essays:**

- The assignment is to be completed and submitted electronically to your seminar leader by the deadline.
- If you wish to write a longer essay, you must get advance approval from your seminar leader.

**LibGuides:**

See LibGuides for PowerPoint slide templates.

**Seminars:**

Check with your seminar leader for any additional instructions or guidance.
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You will also be given comments on your grammar and use of English, to help improve your writing in the future. This will be an assessment of your essay’s style and readability.

You will have one-on-one feedback sessions with your seminar leaders, so you can ask questions of them.

Guarding against Plagiarism

Citations are required when you take an idea from another source. To create proper citations, please refer to the Chicago Manual of Style Quick Guide.

To help avoid plagiarism, please read:


10 Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. Focusing on a present-day challenge. The question asks you to consider the security environment in 2030. This means you must focus on the future and not only label a current security issue with the year 2030!
2. Writing about multiple security challenges. The question asks you to identify the greatest challenge. This means you must pick one!
3. Writing about a tier-two challenge and pretending it’s the greatest challenge. Your seminar leaders will know if you are dodging the question!
4. Answering only ½ of the question. You are asked to identify the greatest future challenge AND offer up mitigation strategies. Don’t neglect the second half of the question!
5. Not using your allotted 1500 words in a balanced way. Devote an equal number of words to the “challenge” part of the question as to the “mitigation/strategies” part.
6. Do your research.
7. Start early – don’t wait until the last minute!
8. Record and identify your sources and cite them as needed.
9. Begin with an outline, even a basic one.
10. Draw on reliable and credible sources.

How We Will Support You

You will be given time for research and writing. You will have an hour at the end of many academic days (4 pm-5 pm) to visit the library and work on your paper. You will also be given time earlier in the day for research on 21 September, 3 October, 9 October, 18 October, and 26 October.

The Marshall Center Research Library will run database training sessions to show you the most relevant databases for the assignment. Sign-up on GlobalNet.

One-on-one writing advice sessions will be offered if you would like feedback on your English language usage and how you organize the paper. Sign-up on GlobalNet.

Sample outlines and sample essays are available on LibGuides, to give you ideas.
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Your seminar leaders will provide feedback on your outline and your draft, to make sure you are on the “right track”.

Online Research and Writing Resources

Perdue Online Writing Lab—offers free resources including information on writing, research, and grammar: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/


English for Academic Purposes (UEfAP)—gives advice on writing essays in English: http://www.uefap.com/writing/genre/essay.htm

Cambridge English Write & Improve—gives you feedback on your essays and helps you spot mistakes that are common for learners of English. Upload your essay and get feedback! https://sat.ilexir.co.uk/

Feeling Stuck?

Here are 4 Tips for Getting started:

Tip 1: Familiarize yourself with the country.
Read several different sources and see what they have to say about security trends and challenges in the country/region. Keep an open mind – don’t automatically assume you know what the greatest challenge will be in 2030!

Here are some sources to look at:


Tip 2: If there is a participant from the country you are assigned in the PASS course, do an informational interview.
That is, ask the participant if you can pose some questions about the country and get their view on current and emerging challenges. You may not agree with everything discussed, but the participant might share some perspectives that are useful for you as you do your research.

Tip 3: Form a writing group.
Meet regularly with 1-3 other participants to share ideas on each stage of the process: selecting a topic, building your argument, drafting an outline, writing a draft, and building your PowerPoint slides.

Tip 4: Speak with your seminar leaders.
Your seminar leaders may also be able to point you to some useful resources or share some perspectives from their own experiences that would be useful to you as you do your research.